

THE CALEDONIAN.
For the Children.

The Five Little Rabbits.

Once upon a time there were five little rabbits who lived with their father and mother in a nice house in a wood. It was not a house built of brick and mortar, with doors and windows to it, such as you, my little readers, live in; but it was dug out of ground, and was called a Warren or burrow. They were all pretty and good-tempered little rabbits, but all, except one of them, had one very great fault. They thought that they were wiser than their father and mother, and so they were not always obedient as good children ought to be. It was this fault that brought all their misfortunes upon them, as I will now tell you.

One morning the father and mother of these little rabbits called them together, and said—“Children, we are going out today, and do not expect to be home till late in the evening. If you are good and obedient, and do exactly as we tell you, no harm can happen to you; but if you are naughty and will not mind, you will surely be sorry for it.

They all promised to be very good and obedient, and their father went on with his directions:

“You must not, on any account,” said he, “go further away from home than the large oak tree on one side and the little cedar sapling on the other. You must run into the house at the slightest noise you hear, without waiting to find out what has caused it, and you must not have anything to say to strangers, nor let any one scold or reprimand you. I need not tell you not to quarrel with each other, for that is something you never do; but I must warn you, Fatty, not to make yourself sick by eating too much, and you, Spotty, must try not to forget every word I have said before your mother and I are out of sight.” The little rabbits promised again to do just as they were told, and their father and mother kissed them good-bye and left them.

When the little rabbits found themselves alone they ran about and began to chase each other around upon the soft green grass. They played very happily together for some time, and then Frisky and Spotty challenged their brother Bunny to race with them as far as a fallen tree a little distance beyond the cedar sapling, “I will run as far as the sapling,” said Bunny; “but I cannot go any further, because papafold us not to.” “Nonsense,” answered Frisky, “the sapling is so near that we could reach it in three jumps. *Tut! tut!* is not so.” “It is as far as I can get,” said Bunny, “and I wish, my dear brother and sister, that you would stay with me.” But Frisky only laughed at him, and Spotty promised to come back as soon as he had reached the fallen tree. So off they started, while poor Bunny stood and watched them, with the tears in his eyes.

In a few minutes they reached the tree. Spotty having won the race, turned back, but Frisky began to play in some long grass which was there, and Bunny and Spotty soon lost sight of her.

tiny knew that it would make Bunny still more unhappy that he was already to hear of Spotty’s late, so he thought that he would go and find Frisky and Fatty first, so that he might have some good news to carry; but when he did find Fatty she was lying dead, too, at the foot of the tree on which grew the vine whose leaves she had been eating. It was a poisonous vine, and she had paid the great penalty of her glutony with her life.

This was too much for Tiny, so he ran back to Bunny, without wanting to look for Frisky, and told him how badly his poor little sister and brother had fared. Bunny cried again when he heard it, and Tiny sat down beside him and howled in most dismal manner.

At last Tiny told Bunny that he would go and look for Frisky.

“Where do you see her last?” he asked.

“In that long grass yonder,” answered Bunny, pointing out the place.

“Very well! I will do my best to find her,” said Tiny. “If I do not, it will not be for want of looking. Good-bye!” and off he ran, leaving Bunny alone again.

“Bunny!” said a little voice overhead. Bunny looked up and saw a little robin sitting and swinging on a branch of the oak tree.

“Did you speak to me?” asked Bunny.

“Yes,” said the robin, putting his head on one side.

“What do you think to tell me?” asked Bunny.

“Tiny will never find Frisky,” said the robin. “I saw a great ugly wildcat, who was prowling around, kill her and carry her off.”

Bunny would not believe the robin, at first, for he could not bear to think that all four of his brothers and sisters were dead through their own faults; but when, after waiting a long time for Tiny he saw him come back alone, he ran into the house without wanting to tell his news, for he could tell by the way his tail was hanging between his legs that he had been unsuccessful.

“Oh, no!” replied Spotty, “she has no gun, he has a strange looking thing, like nothing that I ever saw before, which he laid away in the grass. I wonder what it is. Suppose we go and see as soon as he goes away.”

“Indeed I will not,” said Bunny: “for father told us not to go beyond the oak tree on any account.”

“Well, I will,” said Spotty. “I lost my fun to please you once to-day, and I don’t mean to do it again.”

Now Bunny was no older than his brothers and sisters, and his parents had not told him to try and keep them in order, so he did not say any more, though he felt very sorry when he saw how obstinate Spotty was. Spotty always was bad-humored, and fond of prying into other people’s affairs, and his parents had often told him that he would get into trouble if he did not break himself of this bad habit.

Patty had now finished her apple, and was looking around for something else to eat. She saw some bright, glossy leaves growing on a sort of vine, which clung to the trunk of a tree near her.

A pretty little black and white dog, with curly hair, and long ears and tail, now came running up, and asked the little rabbits to let him play with them for a little while.

“I will not hurt you,” said he. “In the first place, I am not a hunting dog, and in the next, I am too little to do you any harm, even if I were. You may believe what I say, for dogs always tell the truth.”

“I know that,” said Bunny. “Father and mother have often told me so; and I should love to play with you, but I cannot to-day. Come and see us to-morrow, when our parents are at home, and if they are willing, I should be delighted to have them to mind Bunny, and follow his example in everything, and you may guess how happy this proof of their confidence made him, and how careful he always was to try and deserve it.

Then let him stay and play with us now,” said Pinky. Do stay, pretty little dog, and if brother Bunny is afraid of you, I will.”

When the late Alderman Waitman was Lord Mayor of London, a man was brought before him on a charge of vagrancy. “What countryman are you?” inquired the Alderman. “An Irishman, please your honor,” was the reply. The Alderman asked, “Were you ever at sea?” “Come, your honor,” answered Paddy, “I dyed I crossed from Dublin in a wheelbarrow.”

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